

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. Claims 11-26 have been added.

The Office Action dated August 12, 2004, has been received and carefully reviewed. In that Office Action, claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph because of an alleged lack of antecedent basis for the limitation "correction means for changing the requested quantity of the prints in the order information" in claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that all terms in the above limitation have proper antecedent basis. "the requested quantity of the prints" refers back to "a requested quantity of the prints" at lines 7-8 of claim 1. "The order information" refers to "order information" recited at line 3 of claim 1. "Correction means" is positively recited for the first time in the above clause. The rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is therefore respectfully traversed in view of the above remarks.

It is also stated in the Office Action that "there is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim because why the correction means for changing the quantity of the prints in the order information while the user request the quantity of the prints." It appears that the examiner is questioning the utility of providing a correction means as claimed. It is respectfully submitted that the claim defines the structure of the

invention and there is no reason to provide an explanation of the benefits provided by this structure in the claim itself. As explained in the specification beginning at page 2, line 26,

The prints generated by the laboratory are checked by an operator of the laboratory for their quality and quantity... However, printing is not carried out or the prints are not provided to the user in the case where the image data whose printing is requested have been damaged or represent a faulty image such as an entirely black or white image or an ethically questionable image. Therefore, the actual quantity of prints provided to the user is different from the requested quantity of prints.

If this situation is not addressed, the user may be charged for more prints than are actually provided. It is respectfully submitted that a purpose and utility of the claimed invention is set forth in the specification. For this reason as well, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, is respectfully traversed.

New claims 11-26 have been added by the above amendment to further define the present invention. It is noted that claims 11 and 12 include functional language which further define the operation of the correction means.

The sole issue raised in the Office Action dated August 12, 2004, has been addressed, and it is submitted that claims 1-26 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore, the examination and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

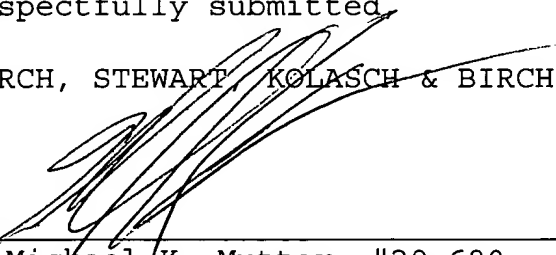
Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a two (2) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$450.00 is attached hereto.


If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By


Michael K. Mutter, #29,680


MKM/STW
2091-0231P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000